

**Cardinal Theodore McCarrick**  
**Archbishop of Washington**  
**Testifying at Cardinal Posadas Testimony**  
**April 4, 2006**  
**House Committee on International Relations**

1. I am pleased and honored to offer some words on the horrific murder 13 years ago this May of the Cardinal Archbishop of Guadalajara, Mexico, His Eminence Juan Jesús Cardinal Posadas Ocampo.
2. Let me first say that I do not possess special knowledge of the circumstances surrounding that ghastly assassination. As with others, I have followed the press on this issue and have had conversations with leaders in the Church in Mexico, including the present Archbishop of Guadalajara, Cardinal Juan Sandoval.
3. And while the Bishops of Mexico have in general been more than skeptical of the official government findings in the case, no one has been more outspoken or more persistent in searching for the truth of Cardinal Posadas' assassination than Cardinal Sandoval himself.
4. It is my strong impression, and it is certainly that of Cardinal Sandoval, that a travesty of justice was committed when the initial inquiry concluded that Cardinal Posadas was simply caught in the cross-fire in a shoot out between rival narcotics gangs. The amount of circumstantial evidence pointing to a very different scenario seems overwhelming.
5. That the assassination of Cardinal Posadas was drug-related appears abundantly clear. But the Cardinal was not just at the wrong place at the wrong time. He was known nation-wide as a fearless critic of the scourge of drug trafficking, denouncing not only the traffickers but those in authority as well who either turned a blind eye or were themselves complicit in this plague that devastates so much of our society today. We in this wonderful city of Washington know all too well the same devastation that Cardinal Posadas fought so courageously in his city and his country. And fought to the death, we might say; a martyr in the war against drugs.
6. In many ways the drug trade and the assassination of Cardinal Posadas are signs of the "culture of death" that our beloved Pope John Paul II decried. The Cardinal's courageous rejection of the drug culture and the culture of death was a sign of the culture of life that we all seek to build.
7. We have recently learned that, as of February 17<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Supreme Court of the State of Jalisco has nullified the sentences of some 13 persons involved in the killing. The sentences were nullified over technicalities and I understand that these individuals can still be charged when new evidence is brought forward.
8. Most importantly, this decision of the State Supreme Court opens the way for a thorough and unbiased examination of the case. It is my hope and prayer that, with re-opening the investigation, the truth about this unprecedented crime may finally emerge. If called upon by the competent Mexican authorities, I am sure that appropriate agencies of our own government will be willing to lend their expertise in the common search for the truth.
9. Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding these hearings. I want to assure you of the abiding interest of the Archdiocese of Washington, and indeed of the entire Catholic Church, in finding ways to combat and lessen the terrible scourge of illicit drugs in our day. Together we must work to replace a culture of death with a culture of life. Thank you.